



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services**

3001 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-3001

Tel 919-733-7011 • Fax 919-508-0951

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Michael Moseley, Director

February 16, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: LME/Area Directors

FROM: J. Michael Hennike, Interim Chief
State Operated Services

RE: Authorization of Hospitalization by Area Program

In light of the policy direction of Mental Health Reform, we are offering this clarification of existing rules on authorization of State hospitalization by area programs/LMEs. It is the expectation of the Division of MH/DD/SAS that area programs/LMEs will assess all referred individuals and, if appropriate, authorize admission to State hospitals prior to referral. A "referred individual" is anyone evaluated by the area program/LME, community providers, emergency departments or local crisis facilities and subsequently referred to the State hospital for admission. This responsibility derives from 10A NCAC 28F .0203, Authorization of Hospitalization by Area Program.

As an exception to the standard procedure, 10A NCAC 28F .0204 states that when individuals arrive directly at the State hospital, such as those transported by law enforcement under emergency petition or transported by family or friends and who are not referred by an area program/LME or community provider, the hospital is responsible for contacting the area program/LME to obtain an authorization before admission is approved.

The purpose of area program/LME authorization at the time of referral to the State hospital is important for two primary reasons:

1. The area program/LME is responsible for managing service utilization, including State hospital bed days, to ensure that individuals are receiving the clinically appropriate levels of care, and
2. To ensure reasonable attempts to divert the individual to community services rather than a State facility.

If you have any questions regarding authorization of hospitalization by area program/LMEs, please contact Lisa Haire, State Operated Services at (919) 733-3654.

LW/lw

cc:	Secretary Hooker Odom	Dick Oliver
	Lanier Cansler	Kay Holder
	DMH Executive Leadership Team	MH Commission Chair
	State Facility Directors	Coalition 2001 Chair
	Carol Duncan-Clayton	SCFAC Chair
	Patrice Roesler	

